

THE OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Military Community and Family Policy

Quick Reference Guide for Health Care Providers Working with Military Families



Providing policy, tools and resources to further enhance the quality of life of service members and their families.

Updated February 8, 2013

Introduction

The Quick Reference Guide for Health Care Providers Caring for Military Families offers practical information about military families. It is designed for use in assessing their medical and psychosocial needs and in delivering effective services.

This guide provides demographic information and highlights the factors that make military family needs unique. Given the current demand placed on the military, it highlights the importance of assessing for the impact of deployment and other stressors on military families and offers suggestions for talking with them about their experiences and needs. The guide also provides referral information for families who need additional support.



Military Demographics: A Young, Married Force with Children

The military is made up of individuals on active duty (1.41M) as well as individuals who are members of the reserve component (848,000). The reserve component includes the reserve elements of the Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force, and the Army and Air Force National Guard. Over half of the active duty members are married with 1.98M family members, as are just under half of the reserve members with 1.16M family members. Of these family members, 42.6% of the active duty children and 28% of the reserve children are 5 years old or younger.

What Makes Military Families Different from Non-Military Families?

- Demographics such as ages of parents and children, a large single population (many of whom have children)
- Cultural diversity of members and families
- Living on a military installation, often in remote locations, away from extended family support
- Frequent absence of the military member due to training and deployments
- Multiple relocations, sometimes entailing living separately
- Exposure to various cultures
- Military member's job entails risk of injury/death
- Military command involvement in the military member's personal and family life
- Irregular hours/unpredictable schedule

Note that these (and other) factors generate strength in some families while they pose challenges for others.

What is Military Family Readiness?

Military family readiness is the state of being prepared to effectively navigate the challenges of daily living experienced in the unique context of military service. Ready individuals and families are knowledgeable about the potential challenges they may face, equipped with the skills to competently function when presented with such challenges and aware of the supportive resources available to help them manage such challenges.

As health care providers working with military families, you are part of the Military Family Readiness System. This network of programs, services, people and agencies on military installations and in civilian communities, and the collaboration among them, promotes the readiness and quality of life of service members and their families. Service providers working within these programs work closely and collaboratively to meet the varied needs of the military families that come to them for support.



What Impacts Family Readiness for Deployment?

- Member readiness to perform his or her assigned mission
- Spouse satisfaction with the military
- Experience with prior separation (may become easier for some and more difficult and challenging for others)
- Marital and family relationships and the ability to manage what causes them stress
- Co-occurring stressors such as relationship difficulties, health problems and financial stress
- Whether they feel prepared
- Feeling connected to, and informed about, support

What You Can Do To Help

- Be aware of services available through the Department of Defense, Department of Veterans Affairs, and other organizations.
- If you are a non-military health care provider, be aware of ways to make your office/agency environment, family and military friendly. Similarly, ask about military service on your intake form. Include options for veterans and reserve members.
- Hang a poster or signage indicating that you support military families
- When a military family member comes to you for health care:
 - Ask them why they came to see you. Then ask them what else they would like to talk about (the real issue may be the one they bring up as they exit your office, leaving little time to respond).
 - Observe energy level, eye contact, facial expression, posture, and other indicators of both physical and emotional distress.
 - Listen to what they do say but also to what they do not say.

Resource and training websites are provided at the back of this guide.

Focus on Deployment

- In this time of high demand placed on the military, there is a good chance that a military family member has had some experience with deployment.
- Ask the family member if he or she has experienced deployment and, if so, ask them to tell you about it.
- If the military member has been, is now, or will be deployed, consider these suggestions:
 - Acknowledge that deployment is a stressful situation.
 - Ask what concerns he or she has about deployment.
- Recognize that even when a member has not been deployed, the military families may have experienced stress similar to that of deployed families:
 - Non-deployed military members may have to work longer hours in the absence of deployed members.
 - These families may need to make adjustments in family functions and routines.
- Ask what support systems they have in place to help address these concerns and others that may come up later.
- Suggest that they contact one of the resources listed at the end of this guide for assistance with current issues and those that might emerge.
- Schedule a return visit within a specific timeframe if family members seem unlikely to follow through on their own.
- During follow on visits, ensure that current needs are being addressed and determine if services need to be adjusted to meet changing/emerging needs.
 - Make a direct referral for specific services as necessary.

Children and Youth

On Installation

- 354 Youth Centers worldwide
- 920 Child Development Program facilities, providing 178,700 child care spaces
- Over 20,500 staff employed, 7,300 of which are military spouses
- 97% of eligible centers are nationally accredited
- Department of Defense child care ranked #1 for standards and #1 for oversight in the continental United States

Off Installation

- 11,000 military youth participated in a variety of camp programs in 2011 at little or no out-of-pocket expense
- Approximately 4,500 Family Child Care homes
- Respite child care provided by the Services and through an MC&FP partnership with the YMCA for families of deployed and independent duty personnel
- Fees range from \$52 to \$140 per week based on total family income

For more information, visit www.militaryonesource.mil/cyt.



Department of Defense Schools

The Department of Defense Education Activity schools provide a pre-kindergarten through grade 12 curriculum for children of service members overseas and in some stateside locations. DoDEA's teachers, administrators and staff recognize, and are trained and experienced to address the needs of military-connected students and their challenges, including frequent moves, transitions and separations from parents.

For more information, visit DoDEA online at www.dodea.edu.

Military and Family Support Centers

- 267 installation Military and Family Support Centers worldwide; all are required to provide the following services:
 - Relocation assistance
 - Deployment assistance
 - Information and referral
 - Personal financial management
 - Employment assistance
 - Outreach
 - Family life education
 - Crisis assistance
 - Volunteer coordination
- The services vary with respect to whether counseling and Family Advocacy Program services are offered in Military and Family Support Centers.

For more information and to find a local Military and Family Support Center, visit www.MilitaryINSTALLATIONS.dod.mil.

Exceptional Family Member Program

- As many as 220,000 members of active duty families may have a member with special needs; over 120,000 are currently enrolled in the Exceptional Family Member Program.
- EFMP enrollment is mandatory for these members.
- EFMP enrollment provides information about the family member's needs, which is taken into consideration when approving an assignment.
- All services provide EFMP family support services.

For more information, visit www.militaryonesource.mil/efmp.

Child and Domestic Abuse Prevention and Treatment

New Parent Support Program

- 391 home visitors at 162 installation-based programs promote a healthy family environment for new and expectant parents. NPSP focuses on protective factors which are designed to reduce the stress and challenges of fostering a new family while creating strong, healthy family bonds. The program provides various services:
 - Home visits — in home support for new parents provides guidance on various aspects of parenthood and child care
 - Hospital visits — a nurse or social worker can visit parents in the hospital to provide advice on issues like breastfeeding, diapering and infant care
 - Referral to other services — NPSP can help identify additional services that parents may need
 - Prenatal classes — classes bring new parents up to speed on proper infant care
 - Parenting classes — hands-on workshops for parents of infants and toddlers
 - Play groups — structured activities in play groups help children develop social and motor skills, and new parents are able to meet and develop a support network



Family Advocacy Program

- Available on 230 installations, FAP addresses child abuse and domestic abuse in the military community through public awareness and prevention, early identification, a comprehensive coordinated response and safety planning, counseling and support to victims, and treatment for offenders and other effected family members, when appropriate. FAP provides classes, workshops and seminars covering various topics including
 - Couples communication
 - Anger management
 - Stress management
 - Effective parenting
 - Conflict resolution

For more information, visit www.militaryonesource.mil/abuse.



Outreach

Military OneSource

Military OneSource is a 24/7 support program offering assistance and resources at no cost to service members and their families online or with professionally trained consultants by telephone. Military OneSource is particularly helpful for service members and families who live far from military installations because they can access services quickly and easily where they live. The Military OneSource program includes the following key components:

- An interactive website with expertly prepared information, resource lists, moderated chats, audios, discussion boards, blogs, podcasts, webinars, access to consultants and an exhaustive online library; the site also includes downloadable and orderable materials
- Information on a wide range of topics, including deployment adjustment, relocation, spouse employment, special needs, parenting, education, elder care and health and wellness
- Master's level consultants available to provide support
- No-cost non-medical counseling services with licensed counselors who provide confidential, short-term, solution-focused counseling face-to-face in the local community, by telephone and online through secure chat (up to 12 sessions per person, per issue)
- Health and wellness coaching by telephone or online with information, support, encouragement for weight management, nutrition, exercise and stress reduction
- Referrals to resources, services and support in military and communities
- Specialty consultations, such as online and telephone financial counseling, spouse career consultations, Wounded Warrior consultations and consultations for families with special needs
- Simultaneous language translation and official document translation in support of a consultation

- Outreach support that incorporates a network of Joint Family Support Assistance Program Military OneSource consultants in each state to provide briefs and support for deployment-related events, including Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program events

For more information, visit www.militaryonesource.mil or call 800-342-9647.

Military and Family Life Counselors

Military and Family Life Counselors are licensed professionals who provide face-to-face confidential non-medical counseling services at no cost to military members and their families for everyday issues such as anger management, stress, parenting, family relationships and deployment adjustment. MFLCs

- Are master's or doctorate level counselors who are licensed to practice counseling independently
- Support service members and family members with non-medical short-term, solution-focused counseling as well as financial counseling services
- Provide private and confidential counseling, with the exception of mandatory state, federal and military reporting requirements (e.g., domestic violence, child abuse and duty to warn situations)
- Provide flexible support to meet the needs of service and family members when and where they need help
- Provide surge support for service members returning from combat or in response to emergency situations at a commander's request with up to 20 MFLCs for up to 45 days
- May be embedded to provide military units with dedicated support
- Support service members and family members on rotations up to 90 days
- Include Child and Youth Behavioral MFLCs who support children and youth in child development and youth programs, schools and summer programs

For more information, visit www.militaryonesource.mil/non-medical-counseling.

Joint Family Support Assistance Program

When National Guard and reserve service members are called to active duty, their families experience the same deployment related challenges as other military families. JFSAP supports Guard and reserve families as well as other active duty families who do not live near an installation and are unable to take advantage of installation support services.

JFSAP teams

- Provide support to geographically dispersed service members and their families in all 50 states, 4 territories and the District of Columbia
- Include some combination of MFLCs, CYB-MFLCs, Personal Financial Counselors, and Military OneSource consultants
- Provide information and referrals, non-medical counseling and education services, child and youth services, and financial counseling and education
- Offer support at briefings, Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program events and other deployment events
- Work with state National Guard and reserve Family Assistance Centers and family programs to augment existing services

For more information, visit www.militaryonesource.mil/jfsap.



Online Resources

Military OneSource

<http://www.militaryonesource.mil>

Provides a 24/7/365 toll-free information and referral telephone service worldwide to active duty, reserve and National Guard military members and their families, offering information ranging from everyday concerns to deployment-related issues

Plan My Move

<http://planmymove.militaryonesource.mil>

Provides online organizational tools designed to make frequent moves easier and less disruptive for service members and families

MilitaryINSTALLATIONS

<http://www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil>

Provides contact information for programs and services, maps and directions, links to comprehensive location overviews, and community points of interest for military installations worldwide

Military Youth on the Move

<http://apps.militaryonesource.mil/myom>

Provides information and resources for elementary, middle and high school-age children and parents to help navigate the challenges of the mobile military lifestyle

TRICARE

<http://www.tricare.mil>

Provides information pertaining to health care resources and benefits for active duty and retired military families

United States Department of Veterans Affairs

<http://www.va.gov>

Provides a wide range of benefits information for veterans including topics such as health care, disability, education and training, vocational rehabilitation and employment, home loan guaranty, dependant and survivor benefits, life insurance, and burial benefits

The National Resource Directory

<http://www.nationalresourcedirectory.gov>

Provides access to services and resources at the national, state, and local levels to support recovery, rehabilitation, and community reintegration for wounded, ill and injured service members, veterans, their families, and those who support them; available information addresses topics including benefits and compensation, education and training, employment, family and caregiver support, health, homeless assistance, housing, and transportation and travel

Joint Family Support Assistance Program

<http://www.militaryonesource.mil/jfsap/service-providers>

Provides information and resources related to JFSAP including the JFSAP Desk Reference and the link for On-Demand Support requests

Joint Services Support

<https://jointservicesupport.org>

Provides information for Guard and reserve members, including event schedules and links to programs specific to National Guard and reserve members and their families

Wounded Warrior Resources

<http://www.militaryonesource.mil/wounded-warrior>

Provides articles and links to other resources specific to the needs of Wounded Warriors and their families



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For assistance with:

Military Life & Deployment

Career & Education

Crisis Situations

Family Life & Recreation

Finances & Legal Affairs

Health & Relationships

Contact

Installation Military and Family Support Center:

MilitaryINSTALLATIONS for local Military and Family Support Center contact information:

www.militaryinstallations.dod.mil

Military OneSource: 800-342-9647 or

www.militaryonesource.mil

Health care resources for active and retired military families:

www.tricare.mil

Resources for geographically dispersed families (JFSAP) -

contact State Family Program Directors:

www.militaryonesource.mil/deployment/joint-family-support-assistance-program

Resources for wounded, ill, and injured service members, veterans, their families, and those who support them:

www.nationalresourcedirectory.gov

Resources for veterans:

www.va.gov





Mission Statement. The Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy is directly responsible for programs and policies which establish and support community quality of life programs for service members and their families worldwide. This Office also serves as the focal point for coordination of the broad range of quality of life issues within the Department of Defense.

Brought to you by the MC&FP
Office of Military Community Outreach



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